NEW ENGLAND FARMER

DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURE AND ITS KINDRED ARTS AND SCIENCES.

VOL. III. SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1851. NO. 6.

RAYNOLDS & NOURSE, *Proprietors.* OFFICE, QUINCY HALL, BOSTON. S. W. COLE, *Editor.*

HOT BEDS.

The preparation of hot beds is a very important part of the market gardener's system, for by them he is able not only to bring several species of plants to perfection, even in winter, and early spring, but he starts a great many plants that are to be perfected in the open air. In some cases a small space in a hot bed will be sufficient to start a large number of plants, the cost of starting which is a mere trifle compared with the price of the crop in the market. Therefore the gardener can well afford to incur the expense of this artificial mode of forwarding plants, and watch them with constant care, for weeks, and even for months, when necessary.

The mode pursued by the market gardener will answer, on a small scale, for the farmer, or any one who would grow vegetables for his own use. A friend has suggested that he can give a good method of making a farmer's hot bed, without glass and with very little trouble. He will oblige us by sending it soon. The hot bed system of forwarding plants, and of perfecting many in the cold season, is practised to a large extent in this vicinity. Some commence their hot beds as early as November, and perfect plants which they have started in the open air in the fall; and they keep hot beds in operation through the winter and spring. But we would not advise a person who has no experience in producing artificial heat for plants to commence early in the season, but begin in the spring and gain experience before going into the business extensively, and in a season of difficult management for the unexperienced.

Generally a location slanting to the south has been considered most eligible; but experience dictates that the slope should be rather to the south-east, to take the morning sun. A tolerably steep slope is best, but a level surface will answer for the location, and many are under the necessity of using such. A hill or mountain on the back side is an excellent natural barrier against cold winds, but for the want of these it is desirable to have a close wall or fence of good height.

No matter as to the soil of the situation chosen for hot beds, as a soil must be made, and suitable kinds for the different plants. For instance, for radishes, sand or sandy loam; for lettuce, a rich soil with a good portion of well decomposed manure.

A good size for sash is six feet long, by three feet wide. The length is from front to back, and a long continuous hot bed is made, and these sashes are laid by the side of each other to cover it. Each sash has four small bars running lengthwise, which gives five rows of glass, six inches wide. There is no cross work, but the panes of glass are lapped, and as the sash slants considerably, the water runs off, as on a shingled roof.

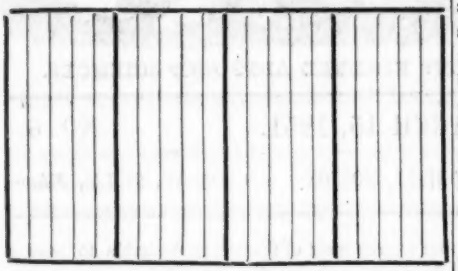
The glass generally used is six by four inches. This is less liable to break than a large size. Some use a still narrower size, remarking that notwithstanding the increase of bars in such case, there is heat enough. But a narrower size would cost more both for sash and glass.

In making a hot bed, it is better to dig down so as to have it mostly below a level with the surface of the earth, as it will be less liable to be affected by the changes of weather. The frame of the hot bed should be made of planks or stout boards; and the front and back should be just far enough apart for the sash to cover them well. The front plank should be about six inches lower than the back. This will give a descent in the glass of one inch to the foot.

The pit in the frame should be about two and a half feet in depth. When the hot bed is made in winter there should be one and a half feet of clear manure placed in the bottom; and this manure should begin to ferment before put into the bed, and put in hot. As the weather grows milder, one foot will be sufficient. On this should be placed a soil and manure adapted to the plants to be cultivated, as we have already named,

and the depth depends on the kind of plants to be started. For lettuce, about six or eight inches of soil; and for radishes, eight to twelve inches.

A bed with 20 sashes is long enough for convenience, on account of crossing over. The following rough sketch, made with the printer's materials, represents a bed with four sashes. The large lines represent the sash, the smaller ones the small bars between the sash frames.



In severe cold weather it is necessary to cover hot beds with straw mats; and yet in the coldest weather the beds must be generally opened a little daily to let off the foul air, and sometimes to allow the superfluous heat to escape. The greatest danger is from too much heat, especially when there is a hot sun and the beds fresh; with the heat from below and from above, the plants are liable to be killed suddenly for want of air.

In beds for winter use, it is necessary to put hot manure down on the outside of the frames of the hot bed, else it will become comparatively cool, near the sides.

The digging of the pit, and the filling in of manure and the soil on it, should be so regulated that when the whole is completed, the glass in front will be about four inches above the soil; and the surface earth in the hot bed should have a gentle inclination to the front. If the glass is placed higher, there will be less heat, and a deficiency in front, which is the cooler part.

We are informed that Mr. Cephas Brackett, of Brighton, manufactures sashes for hot beds; or furnishes the sash glazed. The usual price of sash, of the dimensions we have given, is 80 cents each. The cost of glass is from $1,50 to $6 for 100 square feet, according to quality. Tolerably thin glass answers well with care, and it is light to handle.

TIME FOR TOP DRESSING GRASS LANDS.

Mr. James Howes, Dennis, inquires whether it is best to draw and spread manure on mowing lands in spring or fall. A great deal has been said and written on this subject, and as different practices have resulted from different opinions, numerous experiments have been made.

The question seems pretty well settled, that the fall is the best time for top dressing grass lands. The manure should be applied so late that there will be but little heat to induce fermentation and carry off the fertilizing gases. The manure being applied in the fall, it becomes fine and well decomposed by the frost and storms, without much loss, as the season is cool, and it soon becomes available to the plants, and is not liable to waste from the hot sun late in spring and summer.

But in applying manure in the spring, it frequently becomes late before the land is firm enough to admit of carting the dressing, and the most suitable season for the preparation of the manure, after applied, to render it available to the crop, is passed before it can be applied in the spring, and before the manure becomes well decomposed, we have hot sun and lack of rain, and much of the fertilizing properties are wasted on the air, or the manure becomes dry and hard, and so remains through the summer.

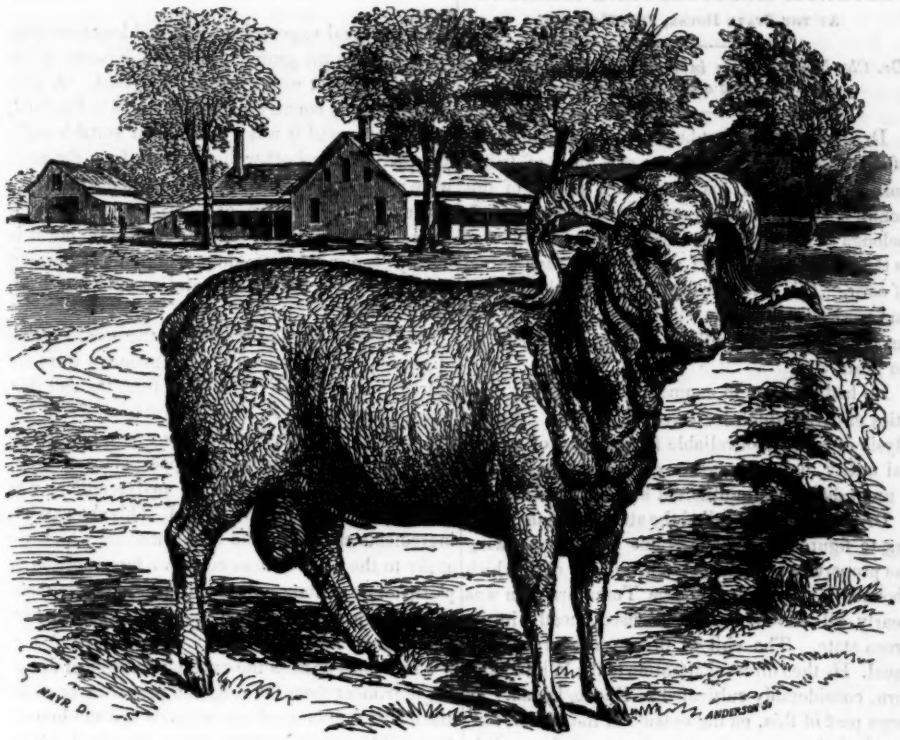
A few farmers have contended that the best mode of application is to haul the manure on the land late in the fall, and drop it in small heaps, and spread it as early in the spring as it can be done. The object is to prevent waste by washing. We have practised this mode with good success, on rather wet lands, where sometimes from heavy rains the water would flow over the land, and in receding would carry off the manure in solution, if not in a body. Whether it is desirable to pursue this course on lands not liable to wash or to be overflowed, we cannot tell, but we offer the subject for consideration.

In England, after the experience of ages, it is determined that the best season for top dressing grass lands, is immediately after the crop of hay is taken off: but that is a country of more rain and less hot sun than our own. We have known seasons here of frequent rain, and less sunshine than usual after haying, and manure that was applied immediately after the crop was removed was soon protected by a luxuriant second crop of grass; and in such seasons, this period of applying manure has proved to be the best.

CELERY.

We are requested to quote the prices of celery. We would reply that there is but very little of this article sold in this market, and the prices are transient, varying every few days. It would be like quoting the prices of cucumbers, melons, and other transient vegetables and fruit. If we collect the prices one day, and send them to our subscribers the next, the prices would be verv liable to rise or fall 50 per cent. before they could bring their produce to the market.

☞ A new building material has lately been introduced into Pottsville, Pennsylvania. It is a brick fifteen by thirty inches, so made as to promise almost equal durability of stone, at one-third the cost.



PREMIUM BUCK BONAPARTE.

Bonaparte.—The best fine wooled buck exhibited at the Fair of the American Institute Oct. 11, 1849; the property of S. C. Roe, Esq., Chester, Orange County, N. Y.

The above cut represents Mr. Roe's prize buck Bouaparte, which received the first premium for fine wool, a silver cup. It was bred by S. W. Jewett, Esq., of Weybridge, Vt., from a pure bred merino ewe which has sheared in six annual fleeces, thirty-six and a half pounds of wool, well washed upon the back.

Bonaparte was sired by Napoleon: the property of A. L. Bingham and S. W. Jewett. Napoleon was bred by John A. Tainter, from a ram and ewe imported by him from France in 1846. Napoleon's first fleece clipped in May, 1848, at fourteen and a half months growth, was 22 1-4 pounds; and his second fleece, cut in June, 1849, at thirteen months' growth, was 23 1-2 pounds; in 1850, at twelve months 23 pounds. The aggregate of his three fleeces weighed 68 3-4 pounds of unwashed wool.—*Copied from Transactions of American Institute, for* 1849, *for N. E. Farmer.*

☞ A small farm, well tilled and manured, will give a greater profit than a large one with the same labor and manure.

PEAT CHARCOAL.

In reference to some articles which we have published on the utility of peat charcoal for manure, we have an inquiry as to the mode of making it, and whether it is burned in the same way as wood when it is converted into charcoal.

The article which we published, to which reference is made, was doubtless from a foreign paper. We have not known of any cases of making peat into charcoal, yet peat is used extensively in this country for manure. It is dug and exposed one year or more to the various changes of the weather and to frosts, which tend to decompose it; and then it is generally made into compost with animal manure, or used in the barn-yard or barn cellar, where it absorbs the liquid manure and becomes decomposed, and the acid which abounds in peat becomes nutralized by the alkaline salts in the manure. When animal manure is wanting, after exposing the peat for decomposition, mix with it lime or ashes, which will destroy the acid, and aid in the decomposition and preparation of the peat for manure. Can any of our readers communicate the mode of making peat charcoal, and the advantages, if any, from it?

SEVENTH AGRICULTURAL MEETING

AT THE STATE HOUSE, FEB. 25TH, 1851.

Dr. Charles T. Jackson in the Chair,—Subject, "Indian Corn and other Cereal Grains."

Dr. Jackson said that he would call the attention of the meeting to the structure of a grain of Indian corn, *Zea maze*. This grain is a native of this country, and it is cultivated very extensively. It belongs to the class of grasses. The silk of corn is the styles, each thread coming from each kernel of corn. The polen or dust falls from the spindle and passes through the silk to the grain. If you cut off or tie up the silk or spindle, there will be no grain.

He had not time to enumerate the different varieties of corn, which were very numerous. An analysis of corn is not reliable for purposes of practical utility, unless the variety is named, as there is a great difference in different kinds of corn.

Dr. Jackson then called the attention of the meeting to figures of various grains of corn, showing the proportion of gluten, starch, and the chit, which abounds in phosphates. The Tuscarora corn was nearly all starch. This is used mostly in its green state. The chit of this corn is larger than usual. He then directed attention to the White Flint corn, considerably cultivated in Rhode Island. A large part of this, on the outside of the starch, consisted of gluten, which abounds in oil, hence it is excellent for fattening. This variety had a considerable portion of starch, and the chit is less than that of the Tuscarora. The Pop corn consisted almost wholly of gluten, hence its snapping properties. When it becomes heated the oil explodes and passes off in gas. One barrel before popped makes 16 barrels. The Rice corn contains more gluten than any other variety, and it is used only for popping. Some kinds of it make 25 barrels from one, by popping. Those kinds of corn that contain a large portion of gluten keep much better than those that abound in starch. As the potato, from which starch has been made, is failing, we must rely on corn to supply its place.

Corn abounding in gluten, or oily matter, is not good for horses, nor for man. In making bread of it, it becomes necessary to add rye meal, that there may be sufficient starch to induce fermentation. For extemporaneous cooking, such as Johnny cakes, flapjacks, &c., Tuscarora and other kinds composed mostly of starch are the best. In answer to a question, Dr. Jackson remarked that popped corn was nutritious and easily digested. It was a mistaken notion that it would swell in the stomach, as it was swelled to its fullest extent in popping. As corn grows most naturally, starch abounds more in corn as we proceed to the South, till we get into South America, where it is about all starch; and as we proceed North, the gluten becomes more abundant. There is a large quantity in the Canada corn.

Indian meal exported to England becomes musty, and when the grain is kill-dried, it becomes bitter, and it is not well ground in England. A gentleman of this country sent to his friend in England, corn in ears, and it was ground in a suitable mill, and the bread and other dishes made from the meal were much admired. With proper management, we may export Indian corn, or meal, to a large extent. A great deal of alcohol is made from corn, but it is mostly used in the arts—in preparations of burning fluid, of vinegar for the preparation of white lead, &c.

Dr. Jackson then proceeded to the consideration of growing of Indian corn, what manures were required, and what the plant took from the soil that was not returned to it, when the crop was sold off. He showed by the analyses of this grain, that it contained large proportions of the phosphates of lime, magnesia, and potash. In all analyses there was a large portion of phosphoric acid. This shows what ingredients should abound in the manure which we apply to the soil. Bones contain a large portion of phosphorate of lime. It is better to dissolve them in sulphuric acid, and then make the manure into a powder by adding ashes.

Vegetables possess the exclusive power of drawing nutriment from the soil, and preparing or manufacturing it into food for animals and the human race. They even convert stones into food. The phosphates are the most important ingredients in our manures. They abound in barnyard manure, and in Guano. The liquid manure from an animal is worth as much as the solid manure. The better way is to add substances to absorb the liquid manure, and apply it to the soil instead of the liquid form. By preparing one part of plaster to 19 parts of peat, a large quantity of liquid manure may be absorbed and rendered a solid portable substance. He would use lime as a decomposer. When added to right soil, it rendered it inodorous, but it should be covered with peat to prevent escape of ammoniacal gases.

Hon. M. P. Wilder stated that in regard to the use of the phosphates, Prof. Mapes analized the soil of a piece of land that would not produce corn, and he found it deficient in phosphates, which he supplied in a cheap manner, and then he obtained a large crop of corn from that land. He thought that with skill in manuring, we might raise wheat in this State with profit. Col. Wilder then presented for distribution several small packages of the Troy winter wheat, which he had received from the Patent Office; he also read an account of it, showing that it was a hardy and productive variety. [We have some of this variety from the Patent Office, which we will give to any who are disposed to try it.]

Hon. Mr. Brooks, of Princeton, read a paper

which he had prepared, showing the profit in raising corn in the Eastern, Middle and Western States, and also the profit when it was converted into pork, allowing four pounds of corn to make one pound of pork; and it appears that the greatest profit, per acre, whether the grain was sold or converted into pork, according to average prices, in different sections, was in the Eastern States. Mr. Brooks remarked that we could also raise wheat in New England with as much profit as in the West.

Rev. Mr. Sanger, of Dover, who was one of the committee on grain crops of Norfolk county, showed from his observation that good crops of corn and wheat were raised in that county.

The president announced that Hon. Amasa Walker, Secretary of State, would preside at the next meeting and open the discussion. Subject,—"Profits of Farming."

On motion of Rev. Mr. Sanger, voted that the thanks of the meeting be presented to Dr. Jackson for his very valuable and instructive lecture.

Voted that the meetings in future commence at half-past seven o'clock.

ISABELLA GRAPES.

We have an inquiry as to the management of the Isabella Grape so as to make it profitable; complaint is made that the fruit rots and falls. This rotting and falling of Isabella grapes is peculiar to the kind. It is too late for our climate, seldom ripening well; and it is also very liable to a blast which destroys the foliage, and then the fruit rots and falls. In one village, in this vicinity, there were in our opinion 100 bushels of Isabella grapes, last year, and the whole of them not worth so much as one peck of good ripe fruit.

A warm location will promote the ripening of grapes, and a sheltered place, as in a city, village or forest, will guard them, in some measure, from the blast, which generally comes in what are called *out* winds; or those blowing from the water. A hill, mountain, or forest, or any other barrier on the south-east, in this region serves, in some measure, as a protection against blasting storms.

BONES FOR MANURE.

In answer to various inquiries on this subject, we would remark, that Ruggles, Nourse, Mason & Co., are agents for the sale of wet bone, and they generally have it on hand. This is the sawdust, produced by sawing bones in water, where they are manufactured into various articles. It is drained and partially dried, and then packed into barrels and sent to market. As the saws with which the bones are cut up are very rapid in their revolutions, this preparation of the bone is very fine.

In Roxbury, Mr. Nahum Ward has a mill for grinding bones, and he probably has a constant supply of crushed bones. As to the crops to which bones should be applied, they have been used to only a small extent in this country, and we have but few reports on their effects. In England bones are used more for the turnip crop, than for any other. Some years ago, about twenty-five bushels were used to the acre, and this was considered equal to a moderate dressing of compost manure. For a few years past, the farmers in that country have generally practised dissolving bones in sulphuric acid, and about one-fourth part as much is used to the acre. When dissolved, they are in so fine a state, that they are readily available to the plant; but when crushed, the largest pieces are some years in decaying and becoming food for plants.

In burning bones a considerable part of the fertilizing properties are destroyed or driven off; but we cannot say what proportion.

SUBSOILING FOR ORCHARDS.

We have an inquiry whether it will pay the cost to subsoil the land for an orchard on clayey hills. We think that on almost every soil, excepting low wet lands, where the trees should be set on the surface, that subsoiling for trees will be profitable. Some roots run down and draw up nutriment and water from the subsoil; and there is a great advantage in having the soil well pulverized so that the roots can penetrate it freely. The cost of subsoiling an acre is small, but we cannot go into an exact estimate unless we have the price of wages where the work is to be done.

A good team of four oxen and two hands will subsoil nearly or quite an acre a day, if the soil be favorable. As to the kind of fruit trees that will be most profitable, we cannot answer definitely so general a question. To decide on a subject of this nature, it would be necessary to know to what market the fruit is to be sent, and then learn what kinds are most cultivated, in order to cultivate those fruits to which but little attention is paid.

DOMESTIC PRESS.

This neat little machine consists of a frame, occupying not more room than one square foot, and a tin cylinder within the frame, which holds a few quarts, with holes on the sides at the bottom. Into this cylinder is placed whatever is to be pressed, and a cover or follower is put in and pressed down with a screw. It is very convenient for pressing various kinds of vegetables, and it will be found a valuable addition to the kitchen utensils and machinery.

This press is manufactured and sold by Wm. R. Fuller & Co., South Canton, Mass. Sold also by Ruggles, Nourse, Mason & Co., Quincy Hall, Boston. Price $1.

For the New England Farmer.

GRASSES FOR PASTURE.

Mr. Cole:—The remarks of your correspondent in the last No. of the "Farmer," on the "Cultivation of Grasses," are illustrative of the necessity which the practical farmer is under of bestowing more attention to this important branch of agriculture. The fact that four or five acres of pasture is required for the support of one cow, very strikingly proves that bad farming in respect to pasture land is worse than no farming at all, since an equal breadth of uncultivated meadow, with its wild indigenous herbage, will afford as much nutritive food for grazing animals as many fields that have come under the so-called improvements of modern culture.

Ten acres of good nutritive pasture, is better than twenty acres of bad; for while the animals increase in weight on the one, they diminish in weight on the other; and a pasture which is merely sufficient to keep animals alive, is insufficient to sustain animals that are daily producing fatty substances, in the shape of milk and butter. In some kinds of grass the quantity of nutritive matter is small compared with others; and many plants which abound in our pastures contain an excess of saline matter which is highly injurious to cattle and sheep, and when eaten by them in any considerable quantity, render the animals subject to disease. The following extract from an accurate observer on this subject will serve to illustrate this fact, and many similar cases have no doubt come under the observation of your readers. They tend to point out the importance of a mixture of such grasses as possess some difference in the qualities of their nutritive matter, and also show that the bitter extractive is efficacious in correcting the over-succulency or laxative nature of green food, without the aid of dry vegetable matter.

"Two fields were sown down for pasture; one with white clover only, and the other with white clover and a variety of the natural grasses. The two fields were depastured with sheep. In the field of white clover, a considerable quantity of the common cocksfoot grass grew on the edge of the fence; from its very unfavorable situation, it was of very harsh quality and consisted almost entirely of culms. In a few days the sheep went to this grass and ate it down entirely, though there was a profusion of the white clover. In course of time the sheep became affected with the disease termed *red water*, of which several died. But in the adjoining field which contained the natural grasses, cocksfoot grass, rough stalked meadow grass, rye grass, foxtail grass, and white clover, the sheep were not affected with that, nor any other disease; and they even left untouched the stems of the cocksfoot grass, which were here of a more succulent nature than those on the edges of the other field, which were so greedily devoured by the clover sheep."

It may here be observed, that if the hard stalks of the cocksfoot in the clover field had been in sufficient quantity, they would most probably have prevented the disease from attacking the sheep; but this could not have been by virtue of the *dry fibre* in the culms only, because the adjoining field where everything was contrary to disease, the sheep rejected the culms altogether. The dry or mechanical action of the culms was here wanting—yet the animals continued healthy, and fattened, because the bitter extractive was in greater proportion to the leaves or herbage, than in the culms or stalks of the grass, which they rejected, and proved also beneficial, though combined with succulent food, which could have nothing of the action of the dry hay, or straw before mentioned.

Almost every farmer has observed the various feeding properties of different fields, and resulting from some cause for which he finds it difficult to accounts. I have known a pasture field, where cattle and sheep could not graze for six days successively, without becoming diseased, but when turned into another field apparently similar, they quickly recovered. The only cause of this extraordinary circumstance, was a probable deficiency of bitter extract and saline matter, which serves the purpose of preventing, to a certain extent the fermentation of the other vegetable matters in the stomach, or in modifying or assisting the functions of digestion.

Many facts might be cited to prove the propriety and benefit of having a variety of the pasture grasses both in hay meadows and pasture fields. The nutritive powers of some are so very small as to be unworthy of culture, or even existence in a pasture, as the Aira Cœspitosa (Tufted hair grass, or Hassock grass of some localities,) the Hordeum Murinium, (Mouse Barley grass,) and various others, which are untouched even by the half-starved animals that graze by the way-side. Some are deficient in nutritive matters, and contain an excess of bitter extractive matter, as some kinds of the Tyme grass; some others may be regarded as nothing better than troublesome weeds; and the only question with the farmer should be, how to exterminate them; for instance, the different kinds of Holcus, or Couch grass, all of which are impoverishing and troublesome weeds in a pasture; and on nearly all light arable land, should be thoroughly eradicated by cropping for a number of years, otherwise the pasture will become worthless, and the fertility of the land become exhausted.

Another important consideration in regard to pasture grasses, is the various periods of their productiveness and maturity. Grasses, like all other vegetables, have their regular periods of vegetation, maturity and decay. Some species of grass are annual, and arrive at perfection in one year, and then die away. As different species of brome grass, foxtail grass, rye grass, oat grass, &c. Other species, in two or three years, attain to that degree of perfection which they never exceed; as perennial rye grass, rough meadow grass, meadow cats tail grass, tall oat-like soft grass, round cocksfoot grass, and others. And some few require more than three years to bring them to perfection. Among these may be mentioned the Meadow Fescue—Meadow Foxtail—Meadow Barley grass—Smooth Meadow grass, and Meadow Oat grass.

The grasses which compose the finest natural pastures are about twenty in number. Many of our pasture meadows contain twice this number of various species of plants; but many of them do not constitute any available food for cattle and sheep, and many more can only be considered as impoverishing weeds. If the best natural pastures be examined at the various periods of the season with care, they will be found to consist chiefly of the following plants:—

Alopecurus Pratensis, (Meadow Foxtail grass.)

Dactylis Glomerata, (Round Cocksfoot, or Orchard grass.)
Festuca Pratense, (Meadow Fescue.)
Phleum Pratense, (Meadow Catstail or Herds grass.)
Anthoxanthum Odoratum, (Sweet Vernal grass.)
Holcus Avenaccus, (Tall Oat-like soft grass.)
Lolium Perenne, (Rye grass.)
Bromus Arvensis, (Field Brome grass.)
Poa Annua, (Annual Meadow grass.)
Avena Pratense, (Meadow Oat grass.)

These afford the principal part of the spring and also a considerable portion of the summer produce.

Avena Flavescens, (Yellow Oat grass.)
Cynosurus Cristatus, (Crested Dog's tail grass.)
Festuca Duriuscula, (Hard Fescue grass.)
Poa Trivialis, (Rough Stalked Meadow grass.)
Poa Pratensis, (Smoothed Stalked Meadow grass.)
Trifolium Pratense Perenne, (Perennial Red Clover.)
Trifolium Repens, (White Clover.)
Festuca Glabra, (Smooth Fescue grass.)

These yield the principal productive pasture during summer and early part of autumn.

Achillea Millefolium, (Yarrow.)
Agrostis Stolonefera, (Creeping Bent grass.)
Agrostis Palustris, (Marsh Bent grass.)
Triticum Repens, (Creeping Wheat grass.)
Lotus Major, (Birdsfoot Trefoil.)
Medicago Lupulina, (Black Medick, or Nonsuch.)

These vegetate with most vigor in autumn.

From the beginning of spring till the end of autumn, there is not a month but what constitutes the particular season of luxuriance of one or more of these grasses, and hence proceeds the constant supply of succulent and nutritious herbage throughout the whole of the season; a circumstance which never happens in artificial pastures where the herbage consists of two or three kinds of grasses only.

But besides these, there are, as I have said, various other plants, which are generally left untouched by the animals, so long as the herbage is good and abundant; but when the more palatable herbage becomes scanty and bare, they eat from necessity many plants which they would not eat from choice. And when the culms of the ripened grasses are all hard and dry, they eagerly devour anything that is succulent, though such plants are frequently productive of disease.

Respectfully yours, L.

For the New England Farmer.

COLORS IN PAINTING HOUSES.

S. W. Cole, Esq.:—Dear Sir,—Trusting you will forgive an humble friend and subscriber for taxing your patience and good humor, by addressing a few lines to you, which may not be put together in as readable a form as is desirable, I take the liberty so to do.

My object in writing at this time is to enter my protest against the custom of painting houses black, brown, yellow, or any of the other thousand and one unsightly colors which have become so fashionable in the vicinity of Boston within a few years The prevalence of this custom betokens—not only in my humble opinion, but, I doubt not, in the opinion of a large number of your readers,—a lamentable want of good taste in the owners of many of our cottages, country seats, &c., which otherwise would tend to beautify the hill-sides, plains and vallies of eastern Massachusetts. But for this bad taste in regard to color, on the part of the proprietors of these dwellings, how beautiful and inviting would be their appearance, where now a shade of gloom hangs around them, that renders them, in an external point of view, dismal and repulsive.

This deplorable fashion, now so much in vogue, was, I believe, borrowed from old England; and, although she probably has other customs far worse than this which she would be quite willing to lend us, I sincerely hope that we shall not only refuse to adopt them, but we shall soon discountenance the practice in question, that has already robbed so many of our thriving villages of much of their beauty, and that the day is not far distant when *all* our dwellings of wood, of whatever name or situation, shall be dressed in *coats of spotless white!*

Several years ago, when I was a subscriber to the "Boston Cultivator," and you were in the editorial chair, an article appeared in that paper, under the editorial head, which (if I recollect rightly) spoke in strong terms against the practice of painting our dwellings white, and argued at some length in favor of the divers colors to which I allude. Two of the reasons given in that article, why colored paints should be substituted for white, were the following, viz:—Firstly, "They are more durable than white." Secondly, "They are not so injurious to the eyes." Now this may be all true, but allowing it is, I should still be decidedly opposed to the change, notwithstanding its truthfulness. On precisely the same ground, and with equal propriety, perhaps, a gay village belle might promenade our streets, or attend the fashionable parties, balls, &c., arrayed in a dress of shaggy "Canada grey," of the thickness of a board; and every one, I think, would acknowledge that a dress made from such a substantial article would be much more durable than the light fabrics usually worn by young ladies, and I very much doubt whether the admiring eyes of dashing beaux would be very seriously injured by gazing at a "lovely creature" thus bedecked, e'en though she were a *dazzling* belle!

Having given another's reasons why colored paints *should be* used on our buildings, I will, with your permission, Mr. Editor, tell a little story by which the reader may learn why, in the opinion of a worthy deacon, it *is* used. At a business meeting held some two or three years since, in a certain school district, not a hundred miles from Boston, it was voted that the school-house in said district should be painted, and Deacon —— was accordingly chosen to employ the painters, and see that the painting was done as it should be; whereupon the Deacon arose, and in a short speech, desired to be instructed in regard to what color he should have the building painted. Said he, "I want to get it painted the color that will suit the majority of the inhabitants of the district. Perhaps if I should go and get it painted my favorite color, it wouldn't suit another man here, and then, in such a case, it would occasion sneering remarks at my expense. Supposing I should paint it black, for instance, they'd say, 'there, he's been and painted it black; I guess he's mourning for his sins.'" By this it appears that Deacon —— considers that to have a house painted a dismal color, is proof positive that its owner is "mourning for his sins." Now it is all very well for a man to mourn over his sins, but

I think he can do it as acceptably in a white house as he can in a black one. But enough of this.

The decidedly superior beauty of white houses in comparison to colored ones, outweighs all the arguments that can be brought against them, and I hope that many, very many, will ere long be made to see and acknowledge that they have sadly marred the beauty of our New England villages, and apply that magic remedy—*white paint*—which will transform their dismal-looking dwellings into beautiful abodes that will ever greet both its inmates and the passing stranger with a smile of welcome.

Winchester, Jan. 30, 1851. J. W.

Remarks.—We have not time to examine all our previous remarks on this subject; but we should not recommend black, excepting in a few particular cases. So we think our correspondent, on this point, has been combatting a mere shadow of his own creating. This will suffice for the story of the Deacon; and as to the dashing belle, a good substantial dress, in cold weather, would be far more appropriate than a flimsy one, and it would commend her to a man of sense.

We are decidedly opposed to painting so many houses white, without any regard to the size, the style of building, the purpose of the building, the location, or the surrounding objects. The universal rage, that has been in years past for white, without any regard to circumstances, shows a want of good taste, as much as white shows a want of any color.

Now we would ask the reader if there is any beauty in white. It is a mere blank, and no more beautiful than a blank in a lottery is desirable. Colors are beautiful; some alone, and others when blended. But white is a destitution of all colors, and can only be admired for its neatness and purity, having a mere negative excellence, being preferable to a color in bad taste.

In all the beauty of nature, which is great and various, what have we that is extensive that corresponds with a white house, or a row, or village of white houses. Snow is the only thing. Now let a person of good taste travel when the earth is covered with snow, and he sees the hills looming up like white houses, and the plains covered with white; how soon will he tire of the monotony of the scene which had no beauty even in the beginning.

When there are many houses, as in a town or village, we would have a variety of colors. We would not paint every building the same color, from the magnificent churches down to the small schoolhouse, and even the still smaller martin-house. We would not paint a house of a dark color, when it was almost wholly shaded with trees, nor would we paint a house white unless we had a good lot of well arranged trees, some evergreens, to break the glare of a colorless paint. In some cases white, from its glare and prominence, forms a beautiful contrast with the surrounding green foliage. The beauty is in the contrast, not in the white or the green.

Some small houses might look pretty with a warm lightish tint, that would be very improper for a stately public edifice; and some rather dark color might be appropriate for the latter, which would give to the former an unsightly and sombre appearance. Besides, the want of beauty in so much white painting, it is dear and transient. To keep a house well painted with white for a course of years, will cost more than to use colored paints generally. Some colors cost more than white, and others less; but colored paints are more durable.

If houses are painted various colors, without any regard to the circumstances which we have named, and various others that should be taken into consideration; then, indeed, J. W., and every one else, who travels about the country, or at home, has the the disagreeable objects in his view, has reason to complain. This is a very interesting subject, in which too little good taste has been consulted, and we should be pleased to have opinions on it.

We are aware that some philosophers consider white a compound of all colors, as presented when they are all rapidly revolved before the eye; but they appear whitish, not white.

For the New England Farmer.

PLOUGHING IN OATS.

Mr. Editor:—As the season is fast approaching when farmers should be thinking about their work for the coming season, I would respectfully solicit your opinion, as to the best method of getting in *Oats*, where the land is both level and smooth.

Some in this vicinity recommend ploughing them in; but the question in my mind is this; is it doing justice to the land, to plough it as shoal, as we should be obliged to, in order to have our seed at a proper depth from the surface?

I am a new beginner in farming, and have had no experience in raising grain; therefore a few hints from the experienced in regard to the above will be highly gratifying to

Yours, &c, J. Dimon.

Wakefield, R. I.

Remarks.—In sowing the oats before ploughing, and then ploughing them in, would not pulverize the soil sufficiently. A great deal depends on the frequent stirring of the soil, and its thorough pulverization. With due attention to this subject, less manure will be required, and as this article is generally scarce, it is best to economise as to its use, and render the soil more fertile by frequent ploughing, harrowing, and cultivating.

Another objection to ploughing in oats is, that the furrow for this purpose must be shallow, else the grain would be buried too deep; of course the ploughing would not be so deep as would be necessary to produce a good crop. A little extra labor in the preparation for the crop would be more than repaid by the superior yield.—Ed.

HOUGHTON'S SEEDLING GOOSEBERRY.

This valuable Gooseberry was raised from seed by Mr. Abel Houghton some years ago, when he resided in Lynn. It is a cross between our native Gooseberry and some foreign kind. It resembles our natives in its growth, hardiness, and superior quality of the fruit.

The berry is rather small as may be seen in the engraving; oval; the skin thin, reddish brown; the flesh fine, very tender, sweet and of a fine delicious flavor. It is a very superior Gooseberry for the dessert, it is also excellent for cooking, and it is in good condition for this purpose for about four weeks.

As a grower, it excels by far all other kinds that we have cultivated; and as to bearing, every season, nearly all the growth of the previous year is covered with fruit. Last year we had from one to two quarts of fruit, on bushes that had been set the previous year. A plant well set in the spring, in a good soil, will make a large growth the first year, and the next year it will be loaded with fruit.

This variety not only excels in growth, bearing and quality, but it is free from blight which is the destruction of almost every foreign kind cultivated in the country. We know of some gardeners, who, having become acquainted with Houghton's Seedling, have excluded every other variety from their grounds. And we have cultivated a select list of foreign kinds, and their fruit has all blasted, while the Houghton has yielded an abundance of fine fruit. We regard it as not only superior to any kind of foreign gooseberry, but worth far more than all of them for this country of hot summers.

The following article on this subject is from Col. Henry Little, of Bangor, Me., well known to horticulturists for his intelligence and zeal in regard to fruit. We copy from the Bangor Courier.

Very much has been done within a few years past in this vicinity to introduce valuable fruits, and whoever visited the Horticultural Exhibition of ours held in Bangor in September last, could perceive the success that has crowned the efforts of our citizen in its cultivation. Among other fruits 50 of the most valuable varieties of the Gooseberry were imported from England by our firm in 1847–8, and they have been found highly valuable in point of flavor, large size and productiveness. In some locations a few of the varieties have mildewed, and in others they have been entirely free from it. It is said that the mildew may be prevented by covering the ground with hay or straw, or what is still better meadow moss, say three or four inches deep —or salt hay.

After experimenting with 40 varieties for four years part, I have found the *Houghton* decidedly the most valuable, as it never mildews, it exceeds any other in productiveness, a very rapid grower, and is very easy to multiply, for unlike all others in its habit it is inclined to run on the ground like a vine. Wherever the branches are covered with earth the layers take root very readily. The berries are about the size of a cranberry, but of first rate flavor. This variety headed the list of ten which were recommended for general cultivation at the American Pomological Congress, held in New York, in October last.

EIGHTH AGRICULTURAL MEETING

At the State House, March 4, 1851.

Subject, "Profits of Farming."

In the absence of Mr. Walker, Mr. French, of Braintree, presided, and called on gentlemen to proceed in the discussion.

Mr. Barrett, of Belchertown, said that his business was farming, and he thought that by industry and economy, a farmer could provide himself with the comforts of life and gain property. But he must put his hands to the work, and not have too many play-days. Yet he need not work very hard, so that labor would be an evil. He was asked whether farmers were as liable to fail as other classes, and he replied that he had never known any farmer to fail, who paid proper attention to his business; but among merchants and manufacturers, failures were common. He had known farmers to buy land, run in debt for it, erect buildings, stock their farms, and succeed well. The farmer should not till a great deal of land. He must be a man of thought and reflection; he must adapt his crops to his soil, and keep the best of stock. The best kinds of grain should be cultivated, as this makes a great difference in the profit. He must also be a temperate man; and he named an instance of a farmer's failing for want of this virtue; and another failed who devoted his attention to swapping horses. As farmers are now becoming more enlightened, they are more respected, and finally they will rule the country.

Mr. A. G. Sheldon, of Wilmington, said that some others might make money faster than farmers, but where one became rich, 99 were poor. No class on the whole do better than farmers. Their business tends to equality in property. In this section we want more milch cows, and we ought to raise more heifers, as they are more valuable than those brought from a distance. One important item in the farmer's profit is the rise of land.

Hon. Amasa Walker having arrived, took the chair, and presided the remainder of the evening. He said in regard to the profits of farming, that no rule would apply to all parts of the State. One may find one crop the most profitable; another may do better with another crop. The crops should be suited to the soil and location. Certain conditions are necessary in order to succeed by farming. Close personal attention is necessary. One cannot farm to advantage by proxy. Strict economy is necessary, and so is skill in the house; but this is not so essential to success with the merchant and manufacturer. He thought that some kinds of farming, such as keeping cows, required to be carried on largely in order to be profitable. We must observe the changes that are going on and adapt our business to them. Beef should be sold at a season when it is in great demand. The butter should be of the best quality. Fruit is an important subject, particularly apples. There is opening in Europe an extensive market for them; and our climate is well adapted to their production.

Hon. Mr. Sprague, of Duxbury, said that in his section the land was poor, not well adapted to profitable farming. The Rev. Morrill Allen, who is called the model farmer, is about the only man in his region who had gained much property by farming; and he had a salary of $400, which was sufficient to support his family, and he gave his personal attention to his farming. It is a question whether a man, under ordinary circumstances, can buy a farm in Massachusetts, and get as much for his labor as the mechanic. Can a man some 20 miles from Boston make money by farming?

Hon. Mr. Brooks, of Princeton, said that there was a profit in farming, and that every man might make it profitable. He then read from a memorandum the profit which he made on a crop of corn, potatoes, small grains and grass, showing that each crop afforded a good profit. He estimated land at $50 per acre, and labor at $1 per day. He showed that in eleven years an acre of land had yielded a profit of $64. He then read statistics showing that there was more profit in raising grain for market, or making it into pork, in the eastern States, than in other sections of the country. He had made 17 per cent. profit in raising stock. Much depends on management. Hogs should be fed regularly, not so that they will squeal with starvation one day, and with repletion the next, for they cannot thrive in either case. Mr. Brooks said that only two or three cows could be kept with profit, and he named a case in which two cows yielded an income of $100 in a year, besides the skimmed milk, which is worth half a cent a quart to make pork.

Rev. Mr. Sanger, of Dover, said that there was a great discrepancy in the views of the two gentlemen who had preceded him, which was owing to one living in a fertile region, and the other on a sterile soil. But in Duxbury, where the soil was poor, the people were drawing riches from the great deep.

Mr. Brooks replied that a profit might be made by farming on light lands.

Mr. H. C. Meriam, of Tewksbury, said that he was in a neighborhood of good farmers, but all the profit they made was not equal to the interest on the value of their farms. If they would sell their farms they could live better on the interest of their money. As to his own farming, his hands worked early and late, as is usual with those near a market, and yet he could not make his farm pay more than four per cent. on the capital invested.

Mr. Sheldon said that he was pleased that one gentleman agreed with him that there was a profit in farming; and if those who did not find it profitable, would come to his town, he could show them

a woman who could learn them how to farm it with profit. Her husband bought a farm and paid for it lacking $600. His health was poor, and he died, leaving three boys, and the estate in debt about $800. She had cleared the mortgage, repaired the house, and educated the boys; and the farm would sell for 50 per cent. more than it cost.

Mr. Barrett remarked that where a man failed from intemperance, another bought the place, and succeeded well, making a good profit on his investment.

Subject for the next meeting, Agricultural Education. Hon. Marshal P. Wilder will preside, and address the meeting.

AGRICULTURAL QUESTIONS.

No. 3.—Subject, *Grasses and Meadow Lands.*

I. What grasses have you cultivated, and what kinds have you found to be the most profitable for mowing and for pasture, keeping in view quantity and nutritious quality?

II. What kinds of grass are best for different kinds of domestic animals?

III. What soil is best suited to herds grass? What to clover, red or white? What to red top? What to blue grass, &c. &c.

IV. What have you found to be the best time for sowing grass seed, and under what conditions should it be sown, and in what quantity of the sward kinds?

V. What kinds of grass seed can be advantageously sown together upon the same field, and in what proportion?

VI. How at the least expense can the greatest quantity of grass be raised on a given quantity of land for a series of years? This question is intended to bring up to view the comparative advantages of a rotation of crops with manure under the furrow; and of top-dressing; and of fall-seeding, with manure on the inverted sod?

VII. What is the comparative value for fodder of a large yield, say three tons of coarse rank grass, and of a smaller quantity, say two tons, of finer grass raised on the same field without forcing?

VIII. In what stage in the growth should grass be mowed, having reference only to the value of the single crop for fodder?

IX. What effect has feeding off or mowing the aftermath upon the quantity and quality of the crop the succeeding year?

X. What is the value of the aftermath or rowen in comparison with hay of the first crop, ton for ton, for the purpose of nutrition, or of fattening, or of milking?

XI. What kinds of manure are best adapted to meadow land in general, and to the several varieties of grass in particular? Thus Gypsum is peculiarly adapted to clover.

XII. What effect has thorough draining upon meadow land, in improving the grass in kind, in quantity, and in quality?

For the New England Farmer.

REMARKS ON FRUIT.

Mr. Cole:—Much has been said and written on the different kinds of fruit, their culture, their quality, and their value; so much so, that a fruit fever was said to prevail through the country, a few years ago; and now, after it has prevailed and spread over the land, let us see whether the effects of the fever have operated beneficially, or otherwise, upon the country at large. That it operated beneficially to the nurserymen, for a number of years, I presume there is not the shadow of a doubt. That it has operated injuriously, in many cases, to those who purchased the trees, I have still to learn; while those people who *improved* their trees of *natural* fruit, by grafting and budding, I know have experienced a benefit; and those people who, amid all the rage of the fever, have gone on in their former course, and have made *no* improvement in the quality of their fruits, have not been "humbugged," as a Boston paper lately represented people had, who favored improvement.

By the way, Mr. Editor, several circumstances favored the spread of the fever. 1st. In consequence of the temperance movement, there has been, in many parts of New England particularly, *less* demand for cider than formerly, and in numerous instances the farmers have nearly abandoned the use of cider as a common drink, consequently natural or unimproved fruit has *declined* in value, and become unsaleable. 2d. At the same time the *increased* demand for *improved* fruit, in our cities and villages, seemed to second the efforts of the temperance movement, for as the demand for cider *decreased*, the demand for *improved* fruits *increased*, and still *continues* to increase, far beyond the powers of producers of *improved* fruit to supply the demand. This is the case so far as my information extends. The result of this state of things is this; *natural* or *unimproved* fruits, which *formerly* sold at *good* prices, *now*, since the prevalence of the fever, will not sell for one-third of their *former* value; while *improved* varieties of fruit sell readily at former prices, with an *increasing* demand. Thus it will be seen that the *increased* demand for *improved* fruits on the one hand, and the *decreased* price and demand for *natural* fruits on the other hand, prepared the way for, if it did not produce, the "fruit fever," of the last 8 or 10 years.

In corroboration of the above remarks, I will produce some cases that have fallen under my observation; Mr. Daniel B. Morgan, of this town, in 1845, grafted a young and thrifty orchard, of about 100 trees, with some of the most approved varieties of apples he could find. For a number of years, that orchard has been the subject of much comment in the neighborhood, many people saying he had done the orchard more *hurt* than good, by grafting it; that he would not be likely to see as much value as he had cut off in grafting, and such like remarks. Well, time has passed away, during which Mr. Morgan "looked well to the ways" of his orchard; and the last year, being the first bearing season of any amount in his orchard, has fairly settled the question, in that neighborhood. I speak within bounds when I say, that his crop of apples this last season has paid the *whole* expense of grafting and

care, up to this time; and completely silenced *all* opposition to his course of action, in regard to this orchard.

As to prices, Mr.Morgan is receiving 4 times as much per bushel as he would if his orchard had not been grafted; for *natural* fruit has sold from 12 1-2 cents to 25 cents per bushel, and *dull* at those prices; while Mr. Morgan's apples have been sold at from 50 to 75 cents per bushel. On the farm where I reside, 6 years ago, the fruit of all kinds was mostly *natural*, and 15 years ago, such apples, pears and peaches as we *then* raised, would sell at *good* prices; apples, &c., that for the last 5 years could hardly be sold at *any* price, would *then* bring from 2 to 3 shillings, and even more, per bushel, with a ready sale. Within the past 6 years I have had about 150 field trees of apples and pears grafted; quite a number of which begin to bear already. My *improved* fruit this last season amounted to about 20 barrels, and should my trees do *well*, I hope in a few years to have as many as 150 to 200 barrels from those trees I have grafted about the farm.

In addition to this, in 1849 I set out an orchard of 3 acres, with choice apple trees, which appear to be doing well. In my experience, I have had abundant proofs of the *natural stock* or *tree* affecting the *ingrafted scion* in the quality of the fruit; as for instance, when scions of a large kind of apples are ingrafted into *large* stocks, of small, knurly apples, of different taste, color, shape, and quality, from the fruit of the *scions* for a number of years, hardly any one would know the fruit raised on such a tree, it would be so different from the fruit from whence the scion came. My opinion from close observation is this; when the ingrafted scion becomes large enough to draw the whole sap of the natural stock, and the amount of *top* is equal to the roots, or more, then the fruit will *improve* in quality, and become more and more perfect.

Preston, Ct., Feb. 10, 1851. C. B. Ayer.

For the New England Farmer.

SOME OF THE CUSTOMS AMONG FARMERS IN THE LAST CENTURY.

Mr. Editor :—I can write something, perhaps for the amusement, if not for the edification of the young farmers of the present day, how farmers in the back towns from Boston conducted their business in the latter part of the 18th century. The economy of that time among farmers and marketmen was truly wonderful. We did not go to market then as we do now, to fetch produce into the country, but were so vulgar as to carry the good things of the land to the good people of the cities who consumed them. The land in the country towns in the vicinity of Boston at that time appears to have been more productive than at present; I suppose from the circumstance of the soil being in better condition, and new fields constantly coming into cultivation after stripping the land of the forests.

The process of farming then was on what is now called the "skinning principle," very little manure being applied to the different grain crops; the dung-heaps were converted into compost and applied to grass fields, potato fields, or hop-yards. I have noticed several farms of late where eight or ten cows, four oxen, two horses, some young cattle and sheep were kept at that time, now dispensing with oxen, sheep, young cattle, and half the number of cows, retaining a horse which has to supply the place of oxen and horses on the farm, and supply the place of a span for the purposes of pleasure and business on the road; this seems rather a hard case for the poor beast, but he must submit to the burdens of his task-master, not having a faculty, like the Israelites, to complain of cruel servitude and hopeless bondage.

To illustrate the manner of farming soon after the close of the revolutionary war, I will relate my own experience, with observations made at the time on the respectable farmers of my neighborhood. My father owned a large farm, for a Bay State man, well supplied with wood and timber, free from stones and easy of cultivation; he raised corn, rye, beans, potatoes and hops, with beef, pork and poultry for the market. His corn and rye were raised in rotation on the same fields without manure till they "cried enough," and then newer and better soil was selected for a field and treated in the same way, and the old field left in Indian hills or in the state it might happen to be in when the last crop was taken off.

These old fields were left to the mercy of "atmospheric influences" for restoration, even without the indulgence of a little grass-seed for past favors. But I believe ingratitude always receives its due reward, like all other violations committed against the laws of God, whether the offence is committed against land or animals; land will not be cheated nor cannot be deceived like credulous human beings, as many a man has found who made the attempt. These worn-out fields were thrown into common pasture for cattle and sheep to graze upon till they were in some measure restored to a degree of fertility, and then go through the skinning operation again, and so on till all vegetation ceased to grow, except some worthless weeds and moss, and the land consigned to sterility.

But an overruling Providence, without the interference of man, by an active principle of nature soon clothed those sterile fields with a dense forest of pines, which are now the most valuable part of the farm. Then, as now, every farmer wanted money to pay taxes, and for various other purposes, and the only way for him to obtain it was to sell his produce at the nighest market for what it would fetch; the nighest wood-market at that time was Medford, then called Mystic, about fourteen miles, where wood was wanted for the purpose of burning bricks as well as for fuel. I have been there myself with good hard wood when it would fetch but about two dollars a cord, and received a part or all my pay in groceries; now that sum would not pay the expenses of teaming.

The economy of marketing the lesser articles at that time was truly wonderful. When a lad, I have been about nineteen miles to Boston market with a variety of articles, the productions of the farm, with a bag of hay strapped on top to decorate my loaded animal and restore his exhausted vigor while I was selling off my load. When I arrived at Charles bridge, I put my horse into a free stable and empted my ornamental bag to him, which he received with unfeigned satisfaction; then I took my turn, bearing the "heat and burden of the day," by shouldering my "commodities" and marching to Faneuil Hall Market without being escorted by music, about one mile, with as much consequence and self-complaisance as a valiant knight would on a

journey to visit his mistress. In these marketing expeditions I started from home in such season as to arrive at old Faneuil about sunrise, frequently being on the road nearly all night, long enough now to go a journey to Kennebec river.

The single horse wagon, if known then, was not in use. All my brother marketmen filled their wallets, saddle-bags, and panniers, and with their own weight made out a commendable load for the beast of burden. On arriving at the bridge the burden was shifted from the beast to his rider, and away he hied to market to dispose of his load; this was the custom of the times in my neighborhood. There was but one marketman in my native town who rode in a carriage, and that was constructed of an old chaise, the top being removed and a wooden box substituted. The change which has taken place since 1790 in improvements and inventions calculated to ameliorate labor and facilitate practical operations would tax the credulity of almost any one born the present century.

At the close of the revolutionary war, money was scarce, produce was low and people were poor. The chief object then was to devise means to keep soul and body in the same neighborhood; that being the case, but little interest was felt in making any improvements but what related to the necessities of present physical wants. But as the times grew better and men had more leisure, people began to think more and discover a readier and better way to do almost every thing. As wealth has increased, extravagance, desire and discontent have increased in equal ratio, and whether people are happier now than then is problematical in the extreme. The community have certainly improved in outward appearances; a man might travel from Vermont to Boston and would seldom see a painted house a half-century ago; now, neat, elegant and convenient dwellings line the streets of almost every town. Then the wells of water were made at such distances from the houses that females were under no inducement to practice gymnastic exercises to invigorate their muscular systems. What changes may take place in the coming half-century is seen "as through a glass darkly;" but if extravagance, political strife, intriguing for office, and disregard of moral rectitude should keep pace with other improvements of the age as heretofore, all philanthropists will have cause to dread coming events as portentous to posterity.

Wilmington, Feb. 1, 1851. SILAS BROWN.

For the New England Farmer.

STATE AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS.

The subject of legislative aid to agricultural schools is one that has been discussed by agricultural writers and speakers, for many years. Of cattle-show addresses this subject often forms the chief material. And so far as I have seen, the arguments are based upon the presumption that the legislature can afford such aid constitutionally and rightfully. Now, I have some doubts of the correctness of this assumption. Most advocates of the measure propose, I believe, something like the following:—The State to turn farmer, purchase a tract of land, erect model buildings, procure model implements, employ scientific and practical instructors, and from the many thousands of farmers' sons in the State, collect a few dozen, who are to go through a prescribed course of instruction and training, to graduate model farmers. Now, I ask, if the right to do all this is conceded to the State, where is the legislature to stop? Will it grant special aid to the farmer, and deny it to the carpenter, the printer, the machinist, the tanner? or, will it be more consistent, and establish model breweries, tan-yards, printing offices, founderies, and a thousand and one other State shops? To my mind this proposition of State Agricultural education, is just as absurd—because it involves the same principle—as the demand of the French people, that government shall furnish them employment.

The State provides for the education of the sons of farmers, in common with those of all other professions, not only in the rudiments of knowledge, but in those higher branches of science which are supposed to be so essential to success in farming. If an acquaintance with chemistry, geology, botany, or even the dead languages, is important to the agriculturist, has not the State done all it can do, to open the door to him for its attainments? Must our democratic idea of education be abandoned, and the old European system be adopted,—the "class," "grade," or "rank," theory? instead of our inestimable "common" schools, and equally common colleges, are we to have one school for farmers, another for mechanics, a third for the professions— one for Protestants, another for Catholic children?

I am aware that to this, for a reply, it may be said, the State has patronized schools of Law, Medicine, Theology, and Fight. But is not all such class legislation going out of fashion? These four professions once claimed privileges, that are boldly denied them in these our days. Other professions—even the once vulgar laborers—come forward and claim the notice of law-makers. And I must repeat the question,—If agriculture is to be placed among the favored professions, by granting it peculiar favor, when is the legislature to stop? If one of my boys adopts the "ancient and honorable" business of farming, will the State furnish him the means of "scientific" knowledge of his profession, and leave the other, who prefers to exercise his skill as a mechanic, untaught?

I happen, Mr. Editor, to be both farmer and mechanic. My days are spent in a shop, in the city; my nights and holidays on my farm, in the country. I may be set down as a dull farmer,—far behind the age—but I venture the assertion, that, *science is needed in the shop, and money on the farm.* Hoping the legislature will govern themselves accordingly, I shall remain for the present,

A MECHANIC AND FARMER.

Winchester and Boston, Feb., 1851.

For the New England Farmer.

CUSTARD SQUASH.

MR. COLE:—The kind of squash which Mr. Raynolds raised, is an old acquaintance. I raised them fifteen years ago. The seeds came from Palermo, and it is, without exception, the richest flavored squash grown in New England. They are hard shelled, and when cooked should be boiled in the shell; when sufficiently cooked, the flesh will readily and cleanly separate from the shell. In planting them, the bed should be made very rich with fresh as well as well rotted manure. The plants

should be planted at such a distance from all other kinds of squashes and pumpkins as will insure no mixing of the other kinds, as the hybrids are greatly inferior to the pure squash. I have had them mix with our common pumpkin. After the plants have started, let the ground be "mulched" with straw, shavings, tan or coarse hay.

Yours, &c., S. Bradford Morse, Jr.

For the New England Farmer.

HOW TO MAKE GOOD BUTTER.

Mr. Cole:—On the 59th page of the "Transactions of the Essex Society," (in the statement of Mr. C. P. Preston, of Danvers,) is the remark—"that during the summer months, with the cream at a temperature of 62°, butter can not be produced as hard as is desirable, nor of so good quality, as as when churned at a lower temperature." This is said to have been ascertained after a fair trial, with repeated experiments. What is the best temperature of cream for churning, is not distinctly stated. I learn generally, from Mr. Preston, that in his opinion, in the warm weather of summer, the cooler the cream, the harder and brighter colored will be the butter. To secure this, care is taken to place the cream in a deep cellar, below the common cellar; or to suspend it near the water in a deep well, until the time of churning. The temperature of water in such wells, is generally, I believe, about 48°;—consequently cream thus placed, will be 10° or more below the temperature prescribed, in the use of the *thermometer churn*. This is a variation sufficient to demand careful examination, by all who would produce butter of the best quality. I have often seen (on the farm where I first learned the rudiments of farming,) butter of superior quality, made in very warm weather, from cream that had been suspended in a well until the time of churning. Butter of *prime quality*, will usually command *half as much again* (say 25 instead of 16 cents,) as that of *ordinary quality*. In what manner can the income of the farmer be more certainly increased, than by due attention to the quality of butter produced? In the vicinity of a dense population, the milk produced on a farm is one of the best sources of income. There are several dairies, within my knowledge, where the cows yield a pound of butter each, *daily*, for at least 200 days of the year;—and milk equal to the production of 75 pounds more, during the remainder of the year. This makes the butter produce of each cow, worth at least $50 a year;—and the milk estimated at 2 cents a quart, worth about the same sum. I speak of cows that will average from 10 to 12 quarts daily, during the milking season. Those that will not do this, had better be exchanged for others that will.

On inquiry of Mr. P. how he obtained his cows, he said he usually bought *two year old heifers* from the *country droves*, and then selected the best. He spoke of buying *two*, of similar age and size, that came in to milk at the same time, and gave nearly equal quantities. But on setting their milk separately, one produced 9 1-2 pounds of butter a week, the other only 5 pounds;—a difference, in the butter-making qualities of the milk, of nearly *one hundred per cent.* J. W. P.

☞ Rogues in rags are kept in countenance by rogues in ruffles.

For the New England Farmer.

FOOD FOR MILCH COWS.

Mr. Cole:—In a late number of your paper were some inquiries as to the best food for milch cows. Here, we have sometimes, in plentiful seasons, used Irish potatoes, with very satisfactory results; the quantity of milk is very much increased by their use,—and the general health of cattle improved. They are cooling and loosening in their effects Would be better pounded or crushed to pieces; and adding a little sweet corn meal has also a good effect.

Yours, J. Ferris.

Cincinnati, Jan., 1851.

SMOKY CHIMNEYS AND FIRE-PLACES.

There is only one general theory essential in all chimneys, and that is the apportionment of the throat to the opening or draught of the room; the closer the room the less the throat; always keeping the throat less than the compass of atmosphere admitted into the room. It would be well also to have the fire-place large enough to build in a false wall, &c., which will always place the difficulty under control.

Let the chimney be high enough not to be interfered with by adjoining buildings.

Let the fire-place be large enough to admit filling in.

Let the offset in the back-wall be at least one foot above the upper part of the fire-place opening.

Let the throat be contracted, leaving it largest in the centre, until the difficulty is remedied.

If these conditions are met, it matters little about the size or shape of the flue above. This is proved in the building of furnaces when heavy draught is required.

SWAPPING HORSES.

Think twice before trading off a horse that has served you well on the whole, though he may have some faults. We have known men to swap off horses that had but one or two faults, for others that had a dozen. This generally arises from the bad temper of the owner. A horse refuses to draw before oxen, and he is put off for one that is not willing to draw anywhere. Another is high-spirited, and the women cannot drive him; he is put off for one that cannot be coaxed out of a walk. Another is not willing to be caught in the pasture; he is exchanged for one that is worthless when caught.

A low horse that hardly keeps your boots from the ground, is put off for one that you cannot mount without a block. A lazy horse is put off for one that has no patience to let you be seated in the chaise, before he must go

On the whole, we would not advise farmers to think of changing off any of their stock for slight faults.—*Bloomington Herald.*

PARSNIPS.

This root has long been an inmate of the garden, and was formerly much used. In the times of Popery it was the farmers' Lent root, being eaten with salted fish, to which it is still an excellent accompaniment. "In the north of Scotland," Dr. Neill observes, "parsnips are often beat up with potatoes and a little butter; of this excellent mess

the children of the peasantry are very fond, and they do not fail to thrive upon it. In the north of Ireland, a pleasant table beverage is prepared from the roots, brewed along with hops. Parsnip wine is also made in some places; and they afford an excellent ardent spirit, when distilled after a similar preparatory process to that bestowed on potatoes destined for that purpose." It is an excellent food for cows, and its fattening properties I have already noticed.—*Farmer's Guide.*

Mechanics' Department, Arts, &c.

FLINT ENAMEL WARE.

Some ten or fifteen years ago, Mr. Fenton, a manufacturer of Fire Bricks, &c., at Bennington, Vt., commenced a course of experiments on the liquefaction by heat and intermingling in various proportions, of the flint quartz, &c., used in his business or existing in the mountains around him, with an eye to the production of wares adapted to household uses. In these experiments he persevered, until at last he was enabled to produce a ware combining strength, purity and beauty,—composed entirely of flint, feldspar and quartz, ground together, bolted like flour, then formed into a clay or paste, and moulded into any shape which taste or use may suggest, then covered with a delicate enamel and baked to a consistency exceeding that of marble. The enamel is formed entirely of flint, without a particle of the metallic bases which renders much of the ware now in use always dangerous and often virulently poisonous.

The Flint Enamel Ware, though especially prized by us for its capacity to supercede the enameled wares now used for milk-pans, stew-pans, coffee-urns, &c., is intended to subserve a far wider circle of uses. Among the articles into which it has already been fashioned, are water-jars, stove-urns, mantel and other parlor ornaments, lamps and candlesticks, table-slabs, door-plates, door-knobs, block-letters, daguerreotype frames, inkstands, pitchers, wash-bowls, bathing-tubs, spittoons, &c., &c.

The usual color of this ware is a rich, dark brown, shaded and fleckled or mottled with white and blue, though it is made of pure white when desired. It is harder than marble, and a delicate pitcher may be thrown on the floor with violence without starting the handle. The point of a nail driven smartly against its side with a hammer makes no scratch or dent of any kind. The enamel stands heat perfectly, and all this ware may be, as most of it is, made absolutely fire-proof, so as to be buried in a pit of burning anthracite and come out of the ashes as good as new. Withal it is nearly as cheap as the "stone ware" now in use. We cannot doubt that it will rapidly find its way into very general use throughout the country. The ware is patented, and agencies for its exclusive sale, by counties and towns, are being formed throughout the Union.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

To Engrave on Steel or Iron.—First cover it all over with beeswax, then write or engrave on to it whatever you wish, with a sharp pointed instrument, so that it cuts through the beeswax. Then mix nitric acid and muriatic acid in about equal parts, and put it on the engraving or writing in the beeswax, and let it remain for a short time; then wash it off and scrape off the beeswax, and you will find that the acid has eaten the steel or iron, where the beeswax was cut through, so as to produce the desired engraving in the steel or iron.

MERRYMAN'S BUTTER PREPARING AND PACKING MACHINE.

In speaking of this machine, the St. Louis Republican gives the following particulars:

We have never seen a process for preparing butter for packing so speedy and certain as that of Dr. Merryman, and noticed a few days since in this paper. The machine consists simply of two rollers in immediate contact with each other, and operated by a crank and spur-wheels. They are placed in a vat or trough, and partially submerged in water. The butter passing through so narrow a space, every particle is brought in immediate contact with the water which washes away the butter-milk as fast as it is expressed from the butter. After this it is only necessary to salt and pack it away in close vessels, and it will be preserved sweet and pure for any necessary length of time. The machine is simple and cheap and saves labor, and does not occupy a space larger than four feet by two. With one properly constructed, a single hand can work 12 pounds per minute, or seven hundred and twenty pounds an hour. We think it ought to be in the hands of every butter maker, and are satisfied that no woman who has to labor over butter for hours, seeing that she could produce better results with comparatively no labor, would be without one. For the renovation of butter it would prove invaluable in the hands of butter merchants. Butter of an inferior quality, may, in a few minutes, be made into good table butter.

Remarks.—For those who consider it best to wash butter, this machine may be useful. But we have never seen finer butter than that which has been well worked without water.—Ed. N. E. Farmer.

Ladies' Department.

THE HUMANIZING INFUENCE OF CLEANLINESS.

A neat, clean, fresh-aired, sweet, cheerful, well-arranged, and well-situated house, exercises a moral as well as a physical influence over its inmates, and makes the members of a family peaceful and considerate of the feelings and happiness of each other; the connexion is obvious between the state of mind thus produced and habits of respect for each others, and for those higher duties and obligations which no law can enforce. On the contrary, a filthy, squalid, noxious dwelling, rendered still more wretched by its noisome site, and in which none of the decencies of life can be observed, contributes to make its unfortunate inhabitants selfish, sensual, and regardless of the feelings of each other; the constant indulgence of such passions render them reckless and brutal, and the transition is natural to propensities and habits incompatible with a respect for the property of others or for the laws.

☞ Why did the lady who purchased a dumb-waiter return it? Because it did not *answer*.

THE WITCHCRAFT OF WOMAN.

I want to tell you a secret. The way to make yourself pleasing to others is to show that you care for them. The whole world is like the miller at Mansfield, "who cared for no nobody—no not he, because nobody cared for him." And the whole world will serve you so, if you give them the same cause. Let every one, therefore, see that you do care for them, by showing them what Sterne so happily calls, "the small sweet courtesies of life," those courtesies in which there is no parade, whose voice is too still to tease, and which manifest themselves by tender and affectionate looks, and little kind acts of attention—giving others the preference in every little enjoyment at the table, in the field, walking, sitting, or standing. This is the spirit that gives to your time of life and to your sex, their sweetest charm. It constitutes the sum total of all the witchcraft of woman. Let the world see that your first care is for yourself, and you will spread the solitude of the upas tree around you, in the same way, by the emanation of a poison which kills all the juices of affection in its neighborhood. Such a girl may be admired for her understanding and accomplishments, but she will never be beloved, The seeds of love can never grow but under the warm and genial influence of kind feelings and affectionate manners. Vivacity goes a great way in young persons. It calls attention to her who displays it; and, if it then be found associated with a generous sensibility, its execution is irresistible. On the contrary, if it be found in alliance with a cold, haughty, selfish heart, it produces no further effect, except an adverse one. Attend to this, my daughter. It flows from a heart that feels for you all the anxiety a parent can feel, and not without the hope which constitutes the parent's highest happiness. May God protect and bless you.—*William Wirt to his Daughter.*

☞ A farmer should never be so immersed in political matters, as to forget to sow his wheat, dig his potatoes, and bank up his cellar.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Of George Hyde, Newton, specimens of the Newtown Pippin Apple. They are not very fair, as to form, and they are becoming discolored mostly over the surface, showing distinctly as we have long contended that this was a very uncertain kind, especially in New England. But to do justice to this fruit, we must say that its quality is very fine, superior to most other kinds. It is not profitable for the market. Also Philadelphia Pippins. This is a small apple, but very fair, fresh and handsome, and it keeps well into summer. The quality is very good. If this should prove to be a good bearer it will be a profitable variety, from its freshness after long keeping. If this fruit is known in Philadelphia it is probably under some other name, as we do not find it in any of the catalogues of the nurserymen of that place.

Of John Washburn, Plymouth, a shoot of the Bigarreau Cherry, set in a *mahaleb* stock. The mahaleb is used as a stock for dwarfs, and the object of Mr. W., in presenting this shoot, is to show that it is not suited to this purpose. This shoot of only one season's growth, is six feet long, and an inch in diameter at the but, and he has had a still larger growth. His tree, which he is sure is the mahaleb, as some of the natural shoots have produced that fruit, is making a prodigious growth, showing that the rapid growth is not peculiar to the scions set on this stock, but the stock itself is remarkably vigorous.

Of Rev. Leonard H. Wheeler, Missionary on Bad River, Wis., on Lake Superior, wild rice, which is peculiar to that region. This grain is of a dark color outside and in; the kernel is longer and less in diameter than the southern rice. It is used for the same purposes. It grows spontaneously around Lake Superior, in the water, in some places where the water is six feet deep. When ripe the Indians pass among the crop with their canoes, and gather it on either side, by bending the heads over their boat, and shaking out the grain. Also a specimen of maple sugar made by the Indians. It is excellent in quality, and fine in grain, but not very white. Another favor in the shape of an ear of Red River corn, of medial size, light color, containing about equal proportions of gluten and starch. This corn was raised by the Indians 500 miles northwest of Lake Superior, in latitude 48° where this grain ripens in two and a half months from planting.

☞ The NEW ENGLAND FARMER is published *every other* Saturday by JOHN RAYNOLDS and JOEL NOURSE, at Quincy Hall, South Market Street, Boston.

Terms, $1,00 per annum in advance.

The FARMER, under the editorial charge of S. W. Cole, is devoted exclusively to Agriculture, Horticulture, and their kindred Arts and Sciences, making a neat octavo volume of 416 pages, embellished with numerous engravings. It may be elegantly bound in muslin, embossed and gilt, at 25 cts. a volume, if left at this office.

☞ Also published at the same office *every* Saturday, on a large handsome folio sheet, the NEW ENGLAND FARMER AND BOSTON RAMBLER, an independent Journal, devoted to Agriculture, Domestic, Foreign and Marine Intelligence, Congressional and Legislative proceedings, Temperance and Religious Intelligence, and the usual variety of Literary and Miscellaneous matter, adapted to family reading. Letters from Home and Foreign Correspondents will appear from week to week, together with a variety of contributed. and selected articles of a Literary, Scientific, Historical, Biographical, Humorous and Juvenile character, short Moral Tales, &c.; containing more reading matter than any other Agricultural Family Newspaper published in New England. Every thing of a hurtful or even doubtful tendency will be carefully excluded from our columns.

Terms, $2,00 per annum in advance. At the close of the year, the publishers will bind the semi-monthly FARMER gratis for any person who subscribes for both publications, paying one year in advance for each.

☞ The Semi-Monthly Farmer contains nearly the same matter as the Agricultural department of the weekly.

☞ All papers will be forwarded, until an explicit order for discontinuance is received; and whether taken by the subscriber or not from the place where they are ordered to be sent, he will be held accountable until he orders a discontinuance, and pays up all arrearages.

☞ When subscribers wish to change the direction of their papers, or when they return a copy to this office, they will please be *particular* to name the Post Office, and State, to which it has been sent, as well as the one to which they wish it directed; as it often happens that two or more of our subscribers are of the same name, and annoying mistakes have occurred in consequence.

☞ Postmasters and others, who will forward four new subscribers on the above named terms, for either publication, shall receive a fifth copy gratis for one year.

☞ All letters and communications should be addressed post-paid to Raynolds & Nourse, Quincy Hall, South Market Street, Boston.